

## NEW JERSEY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PLANNING COUNCIL

### Minutes

April 9, 2025, 10:00 am

This meeting was conducted exclusively through MS Teams video teleconference & conference call

Microsoft Teams meeting

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Dial-in Number: +1 609-300-7196, PIN: 306216820#

Notices of the meeting were sent to the Asbury Park Press, The Times (Trenton), Bergen Record, The Press (Pleasantville), and the Courier-Post (Cherry Hill).

#### Participants:

Donna Miglorino	Darlema Bey (Chair)	Connie Greene (Vice-Chair)	Francis Walker
Heather Simms	Julia Barugel	Jennifer Rutberg	Damian Petino
Winifred Chain	Becky Diliscandro	Michael Ippoliti	Kurt Baker
Tom Pyle	Tonia Ahern	Betsy Weiss	Donna Spencer
Barbara Johnston	Nick Pecht	Lisa Federico	Morgan Thompson
Lisa Federico	Krista Connelly		

#### DMHAS, CSOC, DDD, DMAHS, DoAS & DoH Staff:

Jonathan Sabin	Irina Stuchinsky	Mike Colston	Betsy Weiss
Brielle Easton	Brittany Thorne	Nancy Edouard	Brittany Thorne
Helen Staton	Jessica Han	Yunqing Li	Mike Colston
Chris Morrison	Margaret Lumia	David Helfand	Mark Kruszczyński

#### Guests:

Abigail Lewis	Mike Santillo	Diane Litterer	William Cole
Alejandra Batista	Jeff Lue	Rachel Morgan	Serna Zapardo
Delores McRae	Bernadette Moore	Trisha Bradley	David Armstrong

#### **I. Administrative Issues/Correspondence (Darlema Bey)**

- A. Attendance, 22/34, 64.7% attendance, quorum exceeded.
- B. Minutes of March 12, 2024 General Meeting Approved with minor revisions.
- C. Membership Committee
  1. Recommendation to submit the nomination of Morgan Thompson to the Assistant Commissioner of DMHAS for consideration for membership of the NJ BHPC was approved unanimously. It will be submitted to the Assistant Commissioner of DMHAS by the State Mental Health Planner.
  2. The BHPC Membership Committee has received a resume from a prospective member who would represent children/adolescents with SED.

4. The next meeting of the BHPC Membership Committee will be on April 17, 2025 at 11:00 am.
5. We have reached out to a representative from HMFA
6. Looking for a member to participate in the COMCHO Conference (4/15/25), by manning a table.

D. Nominations Committee

1. Terms of office of current chair and vice-chair expire on June 30, 2025.
2. Elections for the new chair and vice-chair should be held at the June 11, 2025 meeting of the Planning Council.
3. The Chair of the Planning Council should appoint a 3 or 5 person Nominations Committee per BHPC By-Law Article V, Section 1, paragraph 3.
4. Voting members interested in either being nominated for the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Council, and/or voting members interested in serving on the Nominations Committee should email Mark.Kruszczynski@dhs.nj.gov

E. American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) Update (David Helfand, DMHAS)

1. ARPA funds were part of the Covid recovery
2. March 24, 2025 letter from SAMHSA stating that unused ARPA funds could no longer be drawn down.
  - a. 3/25/25 video conference with federal govt.
  - b. 4/3/25: NJ Attorney General Mathew Platkin joined 23 other states to file legal proceedings
  - c. 4/4/25: Federal judge ruled that the halt in funds had to be put on hold.
3. Until we get more feedback from NJ AG's office, DMHAS is putting on hold continued spending of those ARPA funds.
4. Discussion
  - a. Idea to make a letter to SAMHSA to provide support for continued ARPA and Medicaid Funding.
  - b. The TA received from SAMHSA/AHP counselled the BHPC that all of its activities should be advocacy, and that an "Advocacy" committee would be redundant.
  - c. The State MH Planner indicated that the BHPC could still convene a topical, ad-hoc subcommittee that is time-limited, and formed around creating the letter.
    - i. Morgan Thompson volunteered to serve on that ad-hoc committee.

- ii. David Armstrong suggested that consumer/family members get involved with the letter.
- iii. The State Mental Health Planner asked all parties interested in helping to draft a letter about the impact of the ARPA funds and Medicaid funds, contact all of the individuals via email: [darlemabey@gmail.com](mailto:darlemabey@gmail.com), [Mark.Kruszczynski@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:Mark.Kruszczynski@dhs.nj.gov), [Connie.Greene@rwjbh.org](mailto:Connie.Greene@rwjbh.org), [Donna.Migliorino@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:Donna.Migliorino@dhs.nj.gov)

## II. Collaborative Support Program, NJ,

Heather Simms & Chelsea Triano

- A. See PowerPoint shared with BHPC via mail 4/9/25.
- B. Q&A
  - 1. Q: Was your peer advocate funding impacted by the change in ARPA funding? A: No.
  - 2. Q: Discharges from Psychiatric Hospitals. Concerns of discharges of consumers from hospitals to Group Homes rather than other housing types? A: CSP Has seen a decrease in consumers being discharged from hospitals to supportive Housing
  - 3. Q: Is there a way to connect to services especially in the southern region? A: Email JZoyac@CSPNJ.org for the southern Community Wellness Centers.
  - 4. Comment on respite programs with Legacy.
  - 5. See: [https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dmhas/home/hotlines/MH\\_Dir\\_COMPLETE.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dmhas/home/hotlines/MH_Dir_COMPLETE.pdf)

## III. [Substance Use Disorder] Prevention in New Jersey. Diane Litterer, CEO, NJ Prevention Network

Presentation Postponed to May 14<sup>th</sup> meeting

- A. See PowerPoint sent 4/4/2025

## IV. System Partner Updates (Darlema Bey)

- A. Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (Donna Migliorino, DMHAS).
  - 1. Joint application for SUPTRS and MHBG
    - a. Subcommittee meetings should resume for “Needs and Gaps”
  - 2. SAMHSA Monitoring Visit observed the need for the BHPC to have a family member/parent of a child with SED. The BHPC Membership committee has forwarded one such application to the DMHAS State Mental Health Planner

- B. Children's Systems of Care (Nick Pecht, DCF CSOC).
1. Nick Pecht will be no longer the CSOC representative to the BHPC.
- C. Division of Developmental Disabilities (Jonathan Sabin)
1. The Boggs Center has collaborated with the Division of Developmental Disabilities and the Supportive Housing Association of New Jersey to develop a six-lesson webinar series for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and those who support them to better understand independent living and learn about housing options. The series, Understanding Independent Living and Housing Opportunities for People with IDD: (<https://boggscenter.rwjms.rutgers.edu/resources/e-learning-courses/independent-living-and-housing-opportunities-for-people-with-intellectual-and-developmental-disabilities>), can be accessed by anyone and may be especially beneficial if you are assisting someone with IDD transition to independent living or know someone preparing for independent living themselves. The series is also available as a training in the College of Direct Support (CDS).
  2. DDD emailed NCI State of the Workforce Survey invitations to eligible provider agencies that employ Direct Support Professionals (DSPs). All State of the Workforce Surveys must be completed by June 30, 2025. To learn more, visit National Core Indicators (<https://idd.nationalcoreindicators.org/>). DDD is also mailing a letter to family members of individuals who receive at least one DDD-funded service in addition to Support Coordination services. The letter includes a personal link and instructions for the family member to complete the Family Survey online. All Family Surveys must be completed by June 30, 2025.
  3. The Boggs Center on Disability and Human Development has created a new resource, Sharing Your Story: A Guide to Medicaid Advocacy (<https://boggscenter.rwjms.rutgers.edu/resources/publications/sharing-your-story-a-guide-to-medicaid-advocacy>), available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese, Tagalog, and Gujarati.
- D. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (Tatyana Brown, not present)
1. No presentation provided
- E. Division of Aging (Jennifer Rutberg)
1. From NJ Division of Aging Services: Senior Save Navigators can go to the home of a disabled adult or older adult to complete the NJSAVE application. NJSAVE is one application for many programs: [Senior Save Navigators by County Flyer.pdf](#)
  2. NJSave enrolls eligible applicants into the following programs:
    - [Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled \(PAAD\)](#)
    - [Senior Gold Prescription Discount Program](#)
    - [Lifeline Utility Assistance](#)
    - [Medicare Savings Programs](#) (QMB, SLMB & QI)
    - [Medicare Part D's Low Income Subsidy \(LIS, also known as "Extra Help"\)](#)
    - [Hearing Aid Assistance to the Aged and Disabled \(HAAAD\)](#)

3. The application is also used to screen individuals for numerous savings and assistance programs. If it looks like they may qualify, their data is forwarded on for enrollment. These programs include:
    - [Universal Service Fund \(USF\)](#)
    - [Low-Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program \(LIHEAP\)](#)
    - [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#)
  4. Finally, individuals who qualify for PAAD and Lifeline Utility Assistance through NJ Save may also be eligible for:
    - [Property Tax Freeze](#)
    - [Reduced Motor Vehicle Fees](#)
    - [Low-Cost Spaying/Neutering](#)
    - [NJ Hearing Aid Project](#)
- F. Justice Commission, NJ Dept. of Law & Public Safety: (Francis Walker)  
Nothing to report this month.
- G. Department of Education (Damian Petino):
1. See <https://www.nj.gov/education/broadcasts/>
  2. In recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month, the “Second Floor” organization created an app to promote child/family wellness. See <https://www.nj.gov/education/broadcasts/2025/apr/2/xtrn--2NDFLOOR-ChildAbusePreventionMonth.pdf>
  3. Dr. Ingram’s office of student support services posted a website about mindfulness in the classroom: See <https://www.nj.gov/education/broadcasts/2025/mar/19/IncorporatingMindfulnessintotheClassroom.pdf>
  4. <https://www.nj.gov/education/broadcasts/2025/mar/12/SandyHookPromiseSaySomethingImplementationWorkshops.pdf>
  5. Student Support Services at [hib@doe.nj.gov](mailto:hib@doe.nj.gov) or (609) 376-9109.
  6. These are the summer school safety symposiums for school staff and first responders:  
<https://www.nj.gov/education/broadcasts/2025/mar/26/2025AnnualSchoolSafetyandSecuritySymposiums.pdf>
- H. Department of Corrections (K. Connelly):
1. Edna Mahan Women’s Correctional Facility update
    - a. The latest public meeting regarding Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women occurred on March 14<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was recorded and can be watched on the NJDOC’s YouTube page (@njdocnews4178) or at the following link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OD1JgZ-4C5w>.
    - b. As of February, the architect and engineering firm have been contracted for the construction of the new women’s facility, and a contract with a construction management firm is expected in the near future.

- c. Focus groups will be established with the population, the staff, the Board of Trustees, and outside stakeholders to continue to build collaboration during the development process. The planning phase is expected to take approximately a year and a half before construction begins.
  - d. Completion expected in 2027
- I. NJ Div. of Medical Assistance and Health Services (NJ Family Care/State Medicaid) (Irina B. Stuchinsky).
  - 1. Behavioral Health Integration Initiative that launched on Jan 1, 2025  
Upcoming provider and MCO meet & greets:
    - a. Virtual office hours April 23rd from 2pm-4pm. Registration link <https://us06web.zoom.us/join/9hwoFTYSzSAvnmklLGQCQ>
    - b. In-person office hours June 26th from 2pm-4pm at the New Jersey Forensic Science Technology Center at 1200 Negron Drive, Hamilton, NJ 08691 in the Auditorium. Registration link is forthcoming. If you'd like to be added to the invite, please email me at [Irina.stuchinsky@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:Irina.stuchinsky@dhs.nj.gov) and/or [Dmahs.behavioralhealth@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:Dmahs.behavioralhealth@dhs.nj.gov)
  - 2. Please visit the BH Integration Stakeholder webpage at <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dmahs/information/stakeholder/index.html>
  - 3. Here is a question for the Council: Is anyone hearing any feedback from members? DMAHS BH Unit has not been hearing much from members. BH Unit encourages members to reach out with any feedback related to BH Integration.
    - a. Please email the BH Unit at [Dmahs.behavioralhealth@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:Dmahs.behavioralhealth@dhs.nj.gov)
    - b. There is a bi-weekly BH Integration Advocate/Consumer Organization Forum, which meets every other Friday and some members of the council are already part of this forum, which is amazing. Next meeting is this Friday, April 11th 2pm-2:45pm. Please register at the link below if you would like to attend <https://chcs.zoom.us/join/9hwoFTYSzSAvnmklLGQCQ>
- J. Department of Health: (Betsey Weiss):
  - 1. The NJ Department of Health and Rowan University have entered into an agreement to expand and enhance psychiatric care at [Ancora Psychiatric Hospital](#), by bringing academic medicine to one of the State's key behavioral psychiatric facilities.
  - 2. Under the terms of the agreement, Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine's Department of Psychiatry will supply up to six psychiatrists on rotation to Ancora.
  - 3. The partnership has many benefits including: significantly expanding Ancora's capacity to provide specialized psychiatric care, and strengthening mental health services in South Jersey by integrating clinical

expertise with cutting edge research and evidenced based care which is an approach that has been shown to improve patient outcomes.

- 4. Chris Morrison, who is the CEO at Ancora, said it well: “By partnering with Rowan, we’re not just addressing immediate staffing needs – we’re creating opportunities to enhance the quality of care while building a stronger pipeline of psychiatric professionals dedicated to serving our community.”
- K. Division of Family Development (Marie Snyder): Not present
- L. Supported Housing Association (Kate Kelly): Not present.
- M. NJ County Mental Health Administrators Association (Elisabeth Marchese)
- N. NJ Hospital Association (Deena Tampi), Not Present.

**IV. Open Public Comment and Announcements:**

- A. Comments/questions: None
- B. Announcements:
  - 1. COMCHO Conference, 4/15/25, at Pines Manor in Edison. Contact [hsimms@cspnj.org](mailto:hsimms@cspnj.org)

**V. Adjournment:** Darlema Bey 11:57 am

- A. Next meeting: 5/14/25 10:00 am –noon.  
**Join on your computer or mobile app**  
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**Or call in (audio only):** +1 609-300-7196, PIN: 306216820#

- C. Future Agenda Items/  
Additional Items for Meetings in 2025
  - a. Prevention Links (Diane Litterer)
  - b. Quality Improvement Plan (QIP): (Connie Greene)
  - c. NJ DoE Threat Assessment Protocols
  - d. Overview of CSS (Harry Reyes, DMHAS)
  - e. Pretrial Services in Camden County
  - f. JJC Discussion (Filomena DiNuzzo)
  - g. DVR (John Tkacz)
  - h. Presentation on SUD prevention efforts at County Jails?
  - i. Family Member Perspectives
  - j. Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) (Suzanne B.)
  - k. AIR , Youth Suicide Prevention ([kurt@air.ngo](mailto:kurt@air.ngo))
  - l. SUD and the JJC (Francis Walker, JJC)
  - m. Experiences of Consumers in SUD Crisis

- n. State Mental Hospitals (Department of Health, [annmarie.flory@doh.nj.gov](mailto:annmarie.flory@doh.nj.gov) (Service Questions, Appropriateness of Services, Outcomes.)
  - o. DMHAS Fiscal Presentation: August 2025. Confirmed
- D. May 14 2025 Subcommittee Meetings:
  - 1. 9:00 Community Mental Health Block Grant: Gaps and Needs